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A
VINDICATION
Q. OF THE 697.
Innocency of Error, &c.
FROM THE
MISREPRESENTATIONS
OF THE
Lord Bp. of OXFORD,
In his late CHARGE,
AND THE
DEFENCE
OF IT.

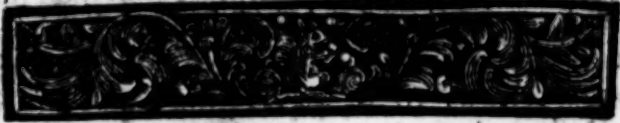
In a Letter to his LORDSHIP.

By ARTHUR ASHLEY SYKES, M. A.
Rector of Rayleigh in Essex.

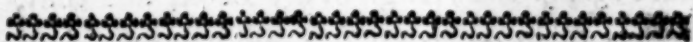
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A
VINDICATION
OF THE
Innocency of Error, &c.



My LORD,



OUR Lordship having turned the Eyes of the Clergy of your Diocese upon a Book, † of *The Innocency of Error, &c.* which I own my self to be the Author; and having given such a Representation of the Doctrines contain'd in it, and of the Author, as might justly (if it be true) make them Both detested by All the World. I cannot, in Justice to those Principles, which I have *there* asserted, and to my self who have so much Cause to complain of ill Usage, but trouble your Lordship in this publick Manner. It is with the utmost Re-

luciance and Uneasiness that I am forc'd to enter into Controversy with your Lordship, whilst your Lordship declares, that you have
 † Defence, † no Intention to enter into Controversy with me.
 P. 18. But I cannot, I will not, be so far wanting to my self, as to sit passive under so publick a Defamation, as attempting to * undermine the great Truths of Christianity; which I know to be my Duty and I have as true a Concern to assert and vindicate, as your Lordship can have.

Your Lordship has been pleas'd to represent the Pamphlet, which has the Misfortune to displease you, as a Tract which contains
 † P. 18. " || pernicious Doctrine," and as one of those
 * Ibid. Books, 'which * ALL good Men wish to have buried in perpetual Oblivion.' I am willing to hope that your Lordship does not confine your Notions of Goodness to only such as declare against the Design of my Book, and that, 'ALL good Men,' by a known Figure of Speech, signifies no more than SOME. Perhaps a great many, who are good, dislike the Notion that Involuntary Errors are Innocent; It may be true, that a great many good Christians are averse to that Notion; but notwithstanding that, the Notion may be true, and 'tis the more to be lamented, that good Christians can be brought to a Dislike of the One only Method, which if pursued, would heal their Breaches, and make Christian Charity extend as far as the Profession of Christianity it self. But whether ALL good Men, or Some only dislike my Book, is not the Point in hand, nor worth a Controversy with your Lordship. But what I insist on, is, That my Book is brought into a Dispute, and the Author

thor of it loaded with the heaviest Charge, for Doctrines and Notions *not* contained in it. Your Lordship was called upon, not by me, to Name the *Author*, or *Authors* who had taught the Doctrines you are so displeas'd with in your Charge; and in Answer to this Challenge, your Lordship alludes to one Book, not published till four Months at least AFTER your Charge was given; and expressly name my Book, which, your Lordship is so good as to bear † me witness, does not come up † P. 26. to the Point in hand.

But to do Justice to your Lordship and to my self, and to the common Reader, I shall beg leave to repeat the Paragraph in your Charge, which *The Innocency of Error* is produced to countenance. 'Some, says your Lordship, have so far proceeded in this Scheme of general Comprehension, or rather Confusion, as to assert, that *ALL Sorts of Errors*, except those, which immediately relate to *Practice*, are *innocent* and unblameable. With these Men, one may perhaps deserve the Name of an *Heretick*, who outwardly professeth something he inwardly disbelieves, and in that Sense condemns himself: But in any other Case, besides this of acting directly against the Dictates of Conscience, under which, 'tis on all hands confessed to be a Fault to defend the Truth it self, *They* plainly intimate, that there is no Harm in maintaining even the Doctrine of *Mahomet*, or *any other*, tho' ever so opposite to the Christian Revelation. We must not therefore wonder to hear it affirmed, that in order to be justified before God, there is no need of any thing more,

' than

‘ than to act agreeably to our *present Persua-*
‘ *tion*, or in other Terms, with *Sincerity* ;
‘ or that equal Degrees of this Quality, will
‘ in all Cases (for I find no Exception made)
‘ entitle Men to equal Degrees of divine Fa-
‘ vour. Whence it follows, [*N. B.*] that They
‘ who *denied*, or even *crucified* our Saviour,
‘ provided they did it *without Remorse or He-*
‘ *sitation*, might *deserve* an equal Reward with
‘ those, who are *Martyrs* for him ? ’ Thus
‘ far the Charge.

In this Paragraph there were no fewer than
Six Mistakes and *Misrepresentations* charg’d
upon your Lordship by the B. of *Bangor* ;
and those so palpable, that He did not scruple
to defy your Lordship to name the Man
or Men who had ever maintain’d or asserted
any of them. In Answer to this it is that
your Lordship has thought fit to name *The*
Innocency of Error, as a Book which asserts
and maintains the Doctrines you oppose. I
must entreat your Patience whilst I examine
each of these Misrepresentations, and shew
your Lordship that not *One* of them is in
the Book you cite as your Evidence.

* PS. p.
212.

My Lord B. of *Bangor* says, * 1. ‘ I here
‘ call upon the Bishop to name *One* serious
‘ Writer (I say so much as *One*) who has
‘ taught, that ALL sorts of *Error*, except
‘ Those which immediately relate to *Practice*,
‘ are unblameable: Or, who has laid down any
‘ thing tending this way, without the *express*
‘ *Supposition* ’ [I must desire your Lordship
to take some Notice of this] ‘ of these Errors
‘ being embraced as Truth, AFTER the most
‘ serious and sincere Enquiry and Consideration ;
‘ or who has not allowed and con-
‘ tended

tended that Errors that are *voluntary*, that is, embraced thro' a Disregard to Truth, or a Prejudice against it, and thro' a wilful Neglect of Information and Consideration; that these *Errors* are *blameable*, and in Religion have a *Sinfulness* in them which arises from the *Will*.

What Reply does your Lordship make to Def. p. 18. this Challenge? Why, that after 'due Care and Circumspection' *i. e.* upon your Examination, and your faithful Representation, you find this Notion taught by the Author of *The Innocency of Error*; and in Evidence you cite five or six Passages. Now

1. If I know *now*, or did know *then* my own Intentions, I declare it was *not* my Design or Thought, that 'All sorts of Errors, except those which immediately relate to Practice, are unblameable.' That your Lordship may see this, be pleased to look into the *Second* Edition, (an Edition which I do not find your Lordship cites, and which therefore I send with this) and in the *Preface*, p. 1. you will meet with this Declaration. 'My Design was to shew how Innocent a thing it is to be mistaken in any Matter where *Industry* and *Honesty*, *Diligence* and *Sincerity* had been applied to find out Truth: That God would never punish a Man for his *Involuntary* Errors, IF he had been *sincere* in his Searches after the Divine Will.' Vid. *Pref.* p. 4, 5, 6, 7. But your Lordship citing the *First* Edition of That Pamphlet, I must look into the Book it self. Therefore

2. After having mention'd several Causes of Error, and shewn them to be not punishable,

† P. 12.
Inno. of
Error.

able, I put the Question, † Whether no sort of Error be Criminal? The Answer is, 1, *All voluntary Errors are Criminal.* 2dly, An Heretick will be justified not because he is passionate, &c. but because his Errors are *innoluntary*. He *doth his best* to rid himself of that Slavery which ties down his Mind to Error, but finds himself *unable* to

* P. 14.

gain the Mastery, &c. 3dly, * A Man may be branded with the Ignominious Characters, &c. but if he be *honest* and *sincere*, [how is that?] and hath *done his best* to rid himself of those Notions, &c. To name one more Place; upon recapitulating what I had been proving in the Whole, I say, || ‘The only *punishable*

¶ P. 27

‘Errors are such as are *Voluntary*, or proceed from *Negligence* :’ And in the next Page,

P. 28.

‘It cannot be Criminal unless it [Error] proceeds from *Negligence* in searching after the Will of God, and enquiring into his Laws; or else from *Wilfulness*.’ I might cite numberless Passages more to the same purpose, which are so express that your Lordship could not but own, what I thank your Lordship for, and what I’ll therefore use as a

† Defence,
P. 20.

3d Argument. † ‘This Author sometimes speaks of Sincerity, and of searching after the Truth.’ It had been no *Favour*, but Justice to have said *generally*, instead of, *sometimes*, as the Impartial Reader will see upon perusing the Book it self. Upon this I appeal to your Lordship yourself, whether I have not condemn’d *Other* Errors besides those which *solely* relate to *Practice*; and whether your mentioning *The Innocency of Error*, be any Justification of the Assertion which appear’d in your Lordship’s Charge, that

that some had maintained ' ALL sorts of Error
' except those which immediately relate to
' Practice to be innocent.'

But your Lordship has refer'd to several Passages which, you think justify *All* Errors but *Practical* ones. To this I answer in general.

1. Supposing, not allowing, that One or All the Passages produced did assert *All* Errors, but *Practical* ones, to be unblameable, yet this would only prove that I had contradicted my self: since in so many *more* places, and where I expressly declare what I design'd, I declare *ALL Voluntary* Errors to be criminal; and entirely put the Innocency of *Error* upon its being *involuntary*. And is the Notion or Opinion of a Man upon any Point to be judged of from accidental Sentences interspersed; or from the general Tenor of a professed Design in any Book? 2. Supposing that the Sentences cited by your Lordship had been entirely omitted; as likewise some others, which mention *Evil Actions*; No Man cou'd have denied but that *Other* Errors besides *Practical* ones would then have been condemned, unless *Practical* Errors and *Voluntary* Errors are of the same Extent. Or if *Practical* Errors be *Voluntary* Errors, They would have been equally condemn'd, with or without these Sentences. From my putting therefore those Sentences in, the *worst* that will follow is only that I had been *needlessly cautious* about *Evil Practices*, and that I did not always carry my Principle to as great a Length as I might have done: it will not follow that only *Practical Errors* are blameable. However, your Lordship having produced these Sentences in proof that I maintain *ALL* Errors but

B (Practical Errors)

Practical ones to be innocent, I must particularly examine each of them.

Defence p. 19. The First is this. ' Whilst Error continues in the Mind it has no other Evil in it than Thought has; which whilst it has no connexion with Practice is never reckoned Evil.' Your Lordship might have been so good as to have added the very *next* Words, and it would have been apparent that I here was speaking upon the *express Supposition* of these Errors being embraced AFTER the most *serious En-*

* *Innocen. quiry.* * ' Should any one,' I say, ' be Error, p. 18. **FIRMLY PERSUADED** that God has a secret Will, &c. Again, ' should a Man mistake the meaning of the Word *ἁμαρτία* --- and notwithstanding ALL HE CAN DO in examining and comparing ' Texts of Scripture, ' yet continue fixt in That as the only Means, &c.' And after these and other Instances produced, this Paragraph is closed thus, ' The Error it self not being attended with any *wicked* Action — and at first embraced ' as a real Truth, AFTER our BEST ENDEAVOUR to know the Truth — under these Circumstances will not be punished. ' Can Words be more *express* to shew upon what Foundation I argued in that Place? The Case is put of such ' whose Errors have ' no necessary Connexion with Practice; but ' yet they may possibly have an Influence upon it. ' The Determination is, that These Erroneous Persons are free from Guilt, if they do not break out into wicked Actions. *i. e.* If upon Occasion of their Errors which are *involuntary* they do not commit such Actions as are really *voluntary*; and criminal, because not necessarily dependent on the Error which

which is *involuntary*. Any of the Instances mentioned shew that this is the Meaning. ' Suppose any one should think the Creed ' commonly call'd of *Athanasius* to be so agreeable to the Tenor of Scripture, that 'twould ' be inconsistent with the true Intent of the ' Christian Religion to have it expunged the ' Book of *Common-Prayer*. ' This Error has no necessary Connexion with Practice; and if it be the Result of a sincere Endeavour to know the Truth, 'tis plainly *involuntary* and innocent. Suppose now farther, that this *Creed* by lawful Governors, and in a regular manner were taken away quite; and upon this the Erroneous Person not only separates from the Church, but imagines that no Faith is to be kept with Hereticks: that 'tis right to murder, fine, and imprison such Men: Suppose him to be guilty of very enormous *Actions*; I say that for these *Actions* He shall be punished; they being strictly criminal: not the necessary Effect of the supposed *involuntary* Mistake, but of Carelessness, or Negligence, or Choice, or Prejudice in not considering as he ought.

† 2. The next Sentence your Lordship † Def. P. cites for Proof, that I maintain *All* sorts of Errors but *Practical* ones to be innocent is this. ^{19. Inno.} ^{Error, P.} ^{20.}

' I conclude that either the Judge of Mankind, Christ, who is over all God blessed for evermore, has not truly told us the Subjects of his Enquiry at the last Day, which would be Blasphemy to say; or else Errors which do not produce *Evil Actions* will not be punished. ' I must beg of your Lordship to shew the Fallacy of this Argument. Christ has declared only *Actions*, not *Passions*, not things in

which we are *Passive*, to be punishable. The Errors there mentioned are *Passions*, not *Actions*: therefore they are not punishable. If Errors are *voluntary*, the Effects of *Choice*, or *wilful* Prejudices, or Negligence, they are strictly *Acts*. And as I have express'd my self in the Answer to the Objections, which this Observation is brought to strengthen, ' If these *first Motions* of Evil Thoughts be *indulged*, if we take *Pleasure* in them, 'tis evident then that we declare our *Approbation* of them, and consequently we make them OUR OWN, and by that means the Man is defiled, and **WILL BE PUNISHED.** I here declare that the Man *will be punished* for his Evil Thoughts, if he makes them HIS OWN; and I confirm this by observing, that our Saviour threatens only *Workers of Iniquity*, *Doers of Evil*, and not such erroneous, mistaken Persons, who are not *Workers*, not *Doers*, but *Passive*, *involuntary Sufferers*. How does this prove that *All* but Practical Errors are unblameable, or that I have asserted any such Notion? The

|| Def. P
19 *Inno.*
Error. P.
12.

|| 3d Sentence is This. ' The fourth and last, and only bad sort of Erroneous Persons, are such as err, and practice according to, and justify their practical Errors. ' Had not Your Lordship stop'd here, the very next Words would have shewn the Reader the *express Supposition* I do not say, but the *express Declaration* of the Grounds upon which they will be punished. ' These 'tis certain will meet with their Deserts, the heaviest of God's Punishments. ' Why? I do not say because their Errors are *Practical*, as your Lordship here must represent me, but — ' In such there is a want of *Honesty*; or which is worse,

‘ worse, the actual Practice of *Disbonesty*, *In-*
‘ *sincerity*, and their Consequents: Here is
‘ *affected* Ignorance, no desire of Information
‘ or Amendment: Here is a Breach of clear
‘ positive Laws, AND the concurrence of
‘ WILL and CHOICE to render it perfect
‘ Malice.’ Can Words express it plainer,
than these do, that Errors embraced thro’
Disregard to Truth, or a Prejudice against it,
or thro’ a wilful neglect of Information, are
blameable? Your Lordship was to name the
serious Writer who had asserted ALL Errors
but *Practical* ones to be innocent; and you
Name me who here expressly contend that
there actually *are many besides* Practical ones that
are sinful, and will *meet with the heaviest of God’s*
Punishments. There is but one Sentence more
produced upon this Head, and That is in these
Words.

* 4thly. ‘ Error is an Assent of the Mind * *Def. P.*
‘ to a thing as true which is not so. If this ^{19.} *Inno.*
‘ extend no farther than the Mind, ’tis what I *Error, P. 3.*
‘ call a simple Error. If a Man proceed up-
‘ on this false Bottom to regulate his Practice,
‘ such Error is then call’d a Practical Error.
‘ How far this latter sort of Errors falls under
‘ the Cognizance of Man, or of a much high-
‘ er Tribunal, that of God, will appear in the
‘ ensuing Discourse. In order to which ’tis
‘ clear beyond Dispute, that simple Errors
‘ are not nor can be punishable.’ Your
Lordship, *by stopping here*, has indeed produced
Words which seem to favour what you charge
me with: But had you cited the very next
Words, every body would have seen that I
was speaking of such simple Errors as are *In-*
voluntary. For thus I go on, ‘ First because
‘ in

‘ in the Perceptions of the Mind Men are
 ‘ perfectly *Passive*; and our Perceptions of
 ‘ things being in numberless Instances quite
 ‘ different from what things really are in
 ‘ themselves, --- we must *necessarily* err. ’
 And after an Instance to explain what I had
 been saying, I add --- ‘ In these --- Cases, Men
 ‘ are as *necessarily* under Errors, as they are
 ‘ *necessary* in their Perceptions, They *cannot*
 ‘ *help* continuing in their Mistakes for Want of
 ‘ proper Means to rectify them; and therefore
 ‘ are no more to blame for not removing them
 ‘ than a Stone is too blame for moving when
 ‘ it is *impell’d*, ’

Your Lordship sees by what I have said,
 that I do not take the Advantage of the Dif-
 ference of Editions, whereas I think I may
 with Justice observe, that in the Second Edi-
 tion, ’tis not in the last Sentence quoted by
 You, *Simple Errors are not, &c.* but ’tis thus,
Simple and Involuntary Errors are not, nor can
be punishable. And for the same Reason I did
 not cite the *Third* Sentence your Lordship
 has mentioned, as ’tis corrected in the *Errata*
 of the Second Edition, *The only bad sort of*
erroneous Persons are such as err voluntarily.
 It would have been Candid in your Lordship
 to have mentioned a *Second Edition*, especially
 since the Book is produced for maintaining
pernicious Doctrines, and to have compared the
 Sentences you cite, and to have acquainted
 the common Reader with these Alterations
 that must necessarily prevent the *pernicious*
Influence of my Doctrines.

Let us now look back to the Occasion of
The Innocency of Error’s being named.

1st. Your Lordship was call’d upon, and declar-
 ed

ed to be *obliged in Honour and Conscience* to name
 ‘ any *one* serious Writer who has asserted that
 ‘ ALL sorts of Error except those which relate
 ‘ to Practice, are innocent,’ as † your *Defence* † P. 13.
 tells us. † Your Lordship then argues thus, *Ibid.*
 ‘ Since there are some who have *blasphemed*
 ‘ God, and *ridiculed* all *revealed Religion*, why
 ‘ should it occasion so much Wonder, to hear
 ‘ of others, who maintain that all, except
 ‘ practical Errors are innocent?’ Your Lord-
 ship was to name a *SERIOUS Writer*, who had
 maintained the latter Notion; and you ar-
 gue that it might be maintained; Because
 one that was NOT a *SERIOUS Writer* had
 treated a Point of great Moment in *Revealed*
Religion, in a very foolish and unjustifiable
 Manner.

2dly. The Objection against your Lord-
 ship is mentioned in your *Defence*, P. 13.
 and then (I cannot conceive why) the An-
 swer is never so much as hinted at till
 P. 19. Five whole Pages are spent in divert-
 ing the Reader about, How far a Man may
 charge another by *Hearsay*; and then *The In-*
nocency of Error is named, as the Book which
 afforded so much Occasion of Offence, and
 which you had in view when you || ‘ collected || P. 12.
 ‘ the Heads of Matter laid before your Clergy at
 ‘ your Visitation.

But 3dly. Whatever your Lordship’s Rea-
 sons were for keeping at such a Distance the
 Challenge of naming *one serious Writer* of the
 Opinion you condemn, and the *Answer* to it,
 I concern not my self with them. Just before
The Innocency of Error is produced, You say,
 ‘ lest there should remain in your Minds, or P. 19.
 ‘ those of any other *unprejudiced Readers*, the
 ‘ least

least Suspicion, that in collecting the
 HEADS of MATTER laid before you at
 my Visitation, any degree of *due Care* or
Circumspection was wanting, I shall now de-
 fire leave to set down a few Passages out of
 many which may be found in -- the *Inno-*
cency of Error, &c. The Prejudiced Rea-
 der here is told that the *Innocency of Error*,
 a Book which all good Men wish to have
 buried in perpetual Oblivion, a Book full
 of pernicious Doctrines. -- This Book sup-
 plied you with the HEADS of Matter con-
 demned in your Charge. But I must beg Leave
 to ask your Lordship, whether any of those
 flagrant things which struck every Body's
 Eye and Thought in the Charge, but have in
 vain been look'd for in the Defence of the
 Charge, whether any of these are in the *Inno-*
cency of Error? Is there any thing in that
 Book, which looks like saying, that the *Cru-*
cifiers of Christ might deserve an equal Reward
with those who are Martyrs for him? Is there
 any thing that gives Countenance to such a
 Notion as this, 'That in the Mahometan Coun-
 tries we may receive the Alcoran, in those of
 India, the Doctrine of the Brahmans; and
 profess all other Schemes of Superstition or
 Idolatry, which are found in any Part of the
 World?' Is there any thing that so much
 as implies that 'all Subscriptions are to be made
 with this tacit Reservation, viz. so far as
 they are agreeable to Scripture?' Your
 Lordship was call'd upon to name that serious
 Writer who had maintained These and other
 Doctrines which make the HEADS, or Prin-
 cipal Parts of your Charge. Your Answer is
 introduced with all the Solemnity possible;

left

Left there should remain in *your* Minds the
 ' least Suspicion, that in collecting the
 ' HEADS of Matter, &c. any Care or Circum-
 ' spection was wanting.' --- And then you
 name the *The Innocency of Error*. No other
Book, or *Author* is once named throughout
 your Lordship's *Defence*, as containing any
 of the *Pernicious Doctrines* you condemn'd in
 your *Charge*. Therefore your Clergy are to
 take it upon your Word that ' the Heads of
 ' Matter laid before them at your Visitation,'
 are all contain'd in this *One Book*. I must
 beg of Them, and of the unprejudiced Rea-
 ders, this common Justice, to believe only
 their own Eyes, and judge for themselves
 with what Justice this Load is laid upon
That Book.

But let us suppose that *The Innocency of
 Error* afforded only the *Heads* for the Doc-
 trines in this *one Paragraph* of the *Charge*.
 ' The Writer of the Postscript (your Lordship
 seems extreamly cautious of naming any bo-
 dy's Name) demands of your Lordship to
 name † one serious Writer who has ever plainly † P. 213.
intimated, that in any Case besides that of act-
 ing directly against the Dictates of Conscience,
 there is no Harm in maintaining even the Doc-
 trine of Mahomet. Your Lordship is pleas'd
 here too to name the Author of *The Innocency
 of Error*, in these remarkable Words, * ' And * Defence,
 ' so far is he from confining this Discourse, P. 20.
 ' [*The Innocency*, &c.] to Christians only, that
 ' he plainly implies he had no Design to ex-
 ' clude Mahometans or Heathens : I need not
 ' speak a Word (saith he, reckoning several
 ' Sorts of simple Errors) about the Heathens
 ' or the Mahometans, which make up, if we
 C believe

‘ believe Mr. Brerewood’s Computation, twenty-
 ‘ six [read it 25] Parts of thirty of the World.
 ‘ So that in this *Writer’s* Account, the Er-
 ‘ rors of all these Persons are innocent, and
 ‘ not punishable by God, unless they hap-
 ‘ pen to be *Practical*.

Now I. I must own my self amazed that
 your Lordship should mention a Sentence of
 mine, which has only the Words, *Heathens*
and Mahometans, in it, in order to prove that
 I assert that *there is no harm in maintaining*
the Doctrine of Mahomet. I was urging that
 if all Errors were damnable, then, not to men-
 tion the *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, All the
 Christian World, except a very few, must
 be damned. Does it follow, that because All
 Christians must be damned, if all Error is
 damnable, therefore all Errors are innocent but
 practical ones ? Or does it follow in your
 Lordship’s way of Reasoning, that because I
 declare that I won’t say a Word about ei-
 ther *Heathens* or *Mahometans*, or their Errors;
 therefore *Their Errors* are innocent, and not
 punishable unless they happen to be *practi-*
cal ? But it seems, ‘ I reckon up several Sorts
 ‘ of simple Errors ’ in that Argument. True.
 I reckon up every Sect of Christians in the
 World, and I mention an Error that every
 one of them assents to. When this is done,
 ’tis added ---- ‘ I need not speak a Word a-
 ‘ bout the *Heathens* or the *Mahometans*, ’ &c.
 The reason is plain, because They are al-
 low’d by All Christians to be in Error. When
 therefore I had shewn the whole World to be
 in Error, and that of a Religious Nature,
 (except the Part I had excepted) I concluded
 that the whole World, (except our little Dust
 upon

upon the Balance) must go into everlasting Punishment, if all Error was damnable. Your Lordship shall be Judge here, whether I ‘plainly intimated that there is no Harm in maintaining even the Doctrine of *Mahomet*,’ excepting in the ‘Case of acting directly against the Dictates of Conscience;’ when the mentioning of them as I did, was saying, *not* there was *no Harm in being* in their Errors, but that they would be certainly *damned for being* in their Errors. But 2. supposing I had said in *general*, without enumerating Particulars as I did, *Humanum est errare*, and had declared that *ALL Mankind* are in Error of one sort or other, would your Lordship infer, that therefore I declare *there is no Harm in maintaining* the particular Errors of any Heathen Nation, because those Heathens are *Men*? For where is the difference? I mention, whilst I am speaking of Errors, *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, but declare I will *not speak a Word* about them: Nor do I make any use of them farther than to declare them to be Men, and consequently in Error. Whether their Errors are *Practical* or *not Practical*, voluntary or involuntary, innocent or damnable in themselves, I neither say, nor enquire; nor does my Argument make it necessary. And yet your Lordship positively names me as the Man, who ‘plainly intimates that in any Case besides the acting *directly* against the Dictates of Conscience, there is no Harm in maintaining even the Doctrine of *Mahomet*.’ Behold the Effects of Zeal, or Haste, or Passion, when even the best and most serious Christians can be worked up to such Mistakes!

Defense,
P. 20.

Your Lordship in the next Words acknowledges that I ‘ sometimes speak of *Sincerity*, ‘ and of *searching after Truth*.’ I must thank your Lordship for this Concession; and I shall only remark that you introduce it thus: ‘ I have *no reason to conceal* from you that ‘ this Author, &c.’ ’Tis not for Me to point out to your Lordship what to *conceal*, and what not: Yet permit me, my Lord, to say, that if you had conceal’d this, your *Defence* had been *consistent* at least. Nothing would have *appear’d* in it, inconsistent with my maintaining ALL Errors but Practical ones, to be innocent. But when your Lordship allows, that I ‘ sometimes speak of *Sincerity*, and of *searching after Truth*,’ --- this is in effect declaring that *Insincerity*, and *Carelessness*, or *Neglect* of searching after Truth, is by *me* condemned, (as it constantly in Fact is) and that *some* Errors *besides* practical ones are punishable. Your Lordship proceeds:

Ibid.
P. 20.

‘ But how far he extends these, [*Sincerity* and *searching after Truth*] we may ‘ learn from p. 13, &c. where we find that ‘ among simple Errors, which are not offensive to, or punishable by God, he reckons those which proceed from following ‘ the *Authority* of other Men. --- Those ‘ which spring from *preconceiv’d Hypotheses*, ‘ and those which are the Effects of *predominant Passions*.’ To understand the Force of this Objection, I must add the Consequence which is drawn from this Account of my Notions by your Lordship. ‘ It is *therefore* ‘ no Fault at all in the Opinion of this Author, to be led into *Mahometism*, or *Insdelity*, or ANY other Error whatsoever, so ‘ long

P. 21.

‘ long as this Error doth not terminate in
 ‘ Practice, even tho’ we should be thus led
 ‘ either by our own *Prejudices*, or *predominant*
 ‘ *Passions*.

Now I acknowledge that I have treated of Error as arising from *Authority*, *preconceiv’d Hypotheses*, and *predominant Passions*. And I am to observe 1. That in the Premises these *Three Heads* are taken notice of; but in the Inference *Two* are only mentioned; *Autho-ity* being for some Reason or other drop’d. But ’tis fit our common Reader should know, that in speaking on this Topick, I confine the Innocency of those Errors which arise from Authority solely to their being *Involuntary*, to their being *not from want of Will to know the Truth, but want of Power to attain it*: And I conclude that Head with declaring, the Faultiness of Error to consist in something else besides Authority. But your Lordship having drop’d this Head, either because you saw it nothing to your purpose, or because I condemn’d implicit following our Guides, or for whatever reason else, I pass it by too to proceed to the 2d Topick, which is, *preconceiv’d Hypotheses*. ’Tis asserted *There*, that Men ‘ought critically to examine the Principles they go upon;’ That, ‘An Hypothesis may be receiv’d as true which may be false, or false which may be true, without any *Wilfulness*, *Insincerity*, or Resolution to maintain it right or wrong: One may not see the Error for want of Abilities; or by bewildring one’s self in intricate Means of discovering Truth, one may sit down with Error.’ In THESE Cases I declare I see *no Harm that can ensue*.

†

sue. As to the Case of *Predominant Passions*, I spoke of such *only* as were not our *Faults*, of such in which we are perfectly *involuntary*, p. 12, 13. of such *which so possess the Soul*, as to leave the *Man* no liberty of Thought. *Pref.* p. 6, 7. And in such Cases I declare it to be my Opinion, that *we become the Objects of Goodness and Mercy, not of Justice and Severity.* p. 12. These are my own Assertions in my own Words. And now I return to your Lordship's surprising Consequence, 'That, in my Opinion, 'tis no *Fault* to be 'led into *Mahometism* by *Prejudices* or *Predominant Passions*, so long as the Error doth not terminate in *Practice*. I answer therefore,

1. That I have not said one Word about *being 'led into Mahometanism or Infidelity* by *Prejudices or Passions*. Nor have I said any thing from whence such a Consequence can be infer'd, as I am charged with. Yet your Lordship has declared in the Face of the World, This to be '*The Opinion of this Author*,' meaning *Me*. But,

2dly, Had your Lordship declared it to be a *Consequence* of the *Opinion* I maintained; sure I am that such *Consequence* cannot be proved, even upon Supposition that your Lordship had represented the *Opinion* justly. Had you declared it, I say, only a *Consequence* of the *Opinion* I asserted, I would in my turn have declared that I *abhor'd* and *detested* such a Consequence. But as 'tis expressly fixed as *MY Opinion*, I have a Right to demand of your Lordship where I have declared or abetted any such: Name the Book, where so much as a *Likeness* to such

such an Opinion may be found, and I'll publicly retract it, and publicly ask Pardon of God and the World. But if such *Opinion* is not to be found, I shall be heartily sorry to see such Imputations countenanc'd by so great a Pen as your Lordship's. Nay, I'll add,

3dly, Your Lordship could not have imputed this Notion to ME, no nor have made it a Consequence from any thing I have said, had you fully consider'd your own Words, or what you design'd to lay to my Charge. Your Words are, 'It is no *Fault* at all to be led INTO *Mahometism*, &c. 'so long as this Error doth not terminate 'in PRACTICE, &c.' Now if a Man be led INTO *Mahometanism*, he necessarily and unavoidably must *Practice* according to the Rules of the *Mahometan* Religion. So that upon your own Account of my Principles, your Lordship ought to have said, not that it is NO *Fault at all*; but that it is even by the Author of *The Innocency*, &c. an allowed *damnable Fault*. I may have erred, perhaps, in speaking so favourably of *Prejudices*, and *predominant Passions*, where we are *not ourselves*; yet every Day's Experience confirms me more and more in my Hopes, that in such extraordinary Cases, We may be the *Objects of Goodness and Mercy*, and not of *Justice and Severity*.

I cannot conceive nor guess what it should be that should lead your Lordship into these Mistakes of my Notions, unless it be that almost constant Care I had, in the Book under your Lordship's Displeasure, to guard our *Actions* as I have done. When I was
speak-

Inno. of
Error.
P. 10.

speaking of the Errors arising from *Authority*, I say, ' Let a Man but take Care of his *Actions*, that they are good and regular, and for ' his Notions let him use but common Prudence and Discretion, &c. ' So likewise upon the Head of *preconceiv'd Hypotheses* :

P. 12.

' In these and such like Cases, if we guard ' against *evil Practices*, if we take Care that ' our *Actions* are but regular, and agreeable to the Laws of Christ, I do not see ' what Harm can ensue. ' And upon the

P. 13.

Subject of *predominant Passions*, I say, ' Here ' we must be very careful of our *Actions*, ' and not imagine that predominant Passions ' will excuse *wicked Actions*. ' These, and several such like Cautions about our *Actions* gave, I imagine, the Notion to your Lordship, that I asserted ' ALL Errors but *Practical* ones to be unblameable. ' But your Lordship mistakes the Design of those Cautions entirely, if you take them in That Way : For that would be to contradict every thing I proposed in writing that Tract. My Intention was to shew that God would not be extream to mark our *Involuntary* Mistakes ; that as *He* would not punish such, *Men* ought not to punish them ; and that our Zeal should be spent more against Vices and Immoralities, than against Errors which are the Result of sincere Enquiries. In this View I allowed no Errors to be innocent but strictly *Involuntary* ones ; none to be criminal, but ' such as spring from evil ' Choice, and cause the Will to be evil ; ' or such as we embrace, knowing them to ' be Errors ; or such as we embrace or retain thro' Prejudice, Sloth, and such like ' Causes. '

P. 9.

Causes. The Design therefore of those Cautions about *Practices* was this, that They were the best *Criteria* whereby a *Man* might judge how far he had acted with *Sincerity* in his Searches : That if he was led to the commission of any external Act, which yet was forbidden by the Law of Christ, it would be a very great Motive for him to *suspect* himself to be wrong informed, and to build upon a Foundation which he ought not. Suppose a Man persuaded in himself, that 'tis lawful to persecute Hereticks, and to compel them to come into the Church of God. Imagine him to have consider'd this Point with the greatest Care and Application, and in Consequence of this to be zealously affected for the Doctrines of that *Church*, or those *Fathers*, which he fancies. This *Error* being by Supposition the Effect of Search and Application, and by him Invincible, the Author of *The Innocency of Error*, thinks it not punishable; but yet advises him to have a regard to his *Actions*. Why so ? Because *Actions* being usually the Result of Opinions, and he being pushed on to commit what the Scripture in clear Terms forbids, *viz.* Murder, Imprisonment, and Persecution for Religion, no other Thing can make him *suspect* himself; or give him an Opportunity of conceiving that he is mistaken after all his Searches. Not that even This will always produce this Effect; but as I knew of no other Means so likely to raise in a Man's Mind Jealousies and Suspicions of Mistake and Error, as this; I thought it very proper to insert those Cautions

D

tions, which now I find so much mistaken by your Lordship.

P. 21.

But I must proceed to consider the next Words of your Lordship's *Defence* to those I have been considering. 'I am blamed,' says your Lordship, for having described 'it as the Opinion of some Men, that *Errors opposite to the Christian Religion*, but 'having no immediate tendency to Practice,' 'are innocent, -- when they proceed from 'the Dictates of Conscience: But here is 'an Author who affirms that the *same Errors* are innocent --- when they immediately spring from predominant Passions.' To this I Answer.

1. Your Lordship has here drop'd *Prejudices*, as before you did *Authority*, and now place this Opinion entirely and solely upon what I have said upon the Head of *predominant Passions*. The Words which are produced by you are these. 'If any Passion 'therefore predominates, and weighs more 'with us than the coolest Reason does, we 'cannot but err; 'tis our *Misfortune*, 'tis 'our *Frailty*, 'tis our *Infirmity*, and we are unhappy in it, but not our *Fault* or *Crime*.'

In. of Er.
P. 12.

The illative Particle, *therefore*, plainly shews, that these Words are a Consequence of others that precede, and confine the Sense to That only. Those Words which immediately precede are, 'Knowledge is not more in 'our Will, than Perception is; nor can 'we help assenting to what we think has 'the best and clearest and most Proofs. We 'cannot assent to any Truth, but such as 'we judge of ourselves, according to the 'Pro-

‘ Probabilities we have. If therefore,’ &c. The Passions then here spoken of, are not *faulty* Passions; not *criminal* ones; not such as are the Effects of Insincerity or Dishonesty; but such as the merciful God will Pity and have Compassion on, as our *Frailties*, because he knows of what we are made. Had your Lordship consider’d that known Appellation of Sins of *Infirmity*, and what nigh Relation they have to what I have call’d *predominant Passions*, I persuade my self you would not have imputed to me, as my *Defense*, Opinion, that ‘ Errors *opposite to Christianity*, P. 21. ‘ are *innocent* when they spring from *predominant Passions*.’ The Words I used perhaps may be improper, and ill convey to the Reader’s Mind, the Ideas I have in mine; and I know not whether *Errors of Infirmity* may make me better understood. What I design’d was, that wherever we are led into Errors, either thro’ an unhappy Frame and Temperament which we *cannot* correct; or thro’ any thing external which may cause them, which yet ’tis *out of our Powers* to prevent, in these Cases I thought we were the Objects of Mercy, not of Justice. Nor do I believe that your Lordship will determine this Point on the uncharitable Side; and say that God will punish Men in another Life for this sort of Errors. Whence then is it that you conclude, that I say that where *predominant Passions* are our *Infirmities*, and not our *Faults*, that there I profess it my Opinion, that it is *NO Fault* to be led into *Mahometanism* by *Passions*? I am plainly speaking of Cases wherein we are absolutely

Passive; or so near it that our Agency is of no moment; and your Lordship speaks of *voluntary, indulged Passions*, which are in reality (however they may be in *moral Language* misnamed) *indulged Actions*. Your Lordship therefore must in common Justice acquit me of a Notion which I never have asserted, nor maintained: Nor can be deduced more from my Principles than from every Man's who holds that there are *Sins* or *Errors* of *Infirmity* which will meet with Mercy.

In. of Err.
P. 13.

What I think must have let your Lordship into my Meaning, had you consider'd it with Candor, is the very next Sentence, 'We must be careful of our Actions, and not imagine that Predominant Passions will excuse Wicked Actions. For --- if We suffer our Passions to take Fire, and break in upon our Duties, we become responsible to the great Judge of all our Actions.' We cannot, I think, I hope, be guilty before God of Wicked Actions, without the Concurrence of our *Wills*. Whilst we are *Passive*, we cannot be accountable for *Actions*, because we do not *act* but are *acted upon*. But then as soon as We become *Agents* by *permitting* and *indulging* our Passions, We then are responsible, because the *Act* is *our own*. This I hope will satisfy your Lordship that in my Opinion, Errors that lead INTO *Mahometanism* and *Infidelity*, are not maintained to be innocent and unblameable; and that *Practical Errors*, or not *Practical*, is not of any Consequence, but *Voluntary* and *Involuntary*, the Effects of *Sincerity* or *Insincerity*.
The

The next Step your Lordship takes, is, to *Defense*,
 plead for Pardon, ' if you had inadvertent-^{P. 21.}
 ly mistaken in some Points the Meaning
 ' of *those Authors*, ' (I suppose you would
 have said, *That Author*, for you have na-
 med no body but the *Author of The Innocency*
of Error) ' who seem'd to you to UNDER-
 ' MINE the great Truths of Christianity. ' Your Lordship's ' Concern for the great
 ' Truths of Christianity, ' and your Guard
 against ' the pernicious Influence of evil
 ' Doctrines, ' is certainly to be commended.
 But yet 'tis very consistent to value and
 approve a real Concern for Christ; and to
 vindicate one's self from any unjust Imputa-
 tions, which may be inadvertently thrown
 out, thro'a hasty Zeal. I must therefore with
 all Deference beseech your Lordship to name
 any *One* Great Truth of *Christianity*, which that
 Book of mine *undermines*. If there be but *One*,
 tho' your Lordship speaks of *more* than *One*)
 if, I say, there is *One* great Truth of *Chri-*
stianity undermined, I'll detest the Book, and
 abhor my self for writing it. If your Lord-
 ship means *One* or *more* great Truths (as
 they are call'd) of *Men*, fallible Men; I
 own, the more it *undermines* of Them, and
 the more it destroys, I shall rejoyce. But
 then I shall be sorry to see any Christian,
 much more to see your Lordship, confound-
 ing the Inventions of Men, and the Doc-
 trines of Christ; or thinking it an *undermining*,
 or weakning of Christianity, to blow up the
 Rubbish that has so long defaced its Beau-
 ty. The Design of that Book was to teach
 People to hold the *Unity of the Spirit in the*
Bond

Bond of PEACE, not in the Bonds of Hatred and Enmity, of Persecutions and Cruelty : 'Twas to make Love and Charity abound, by shewing the merciful and kind Disposition of God to his Creatures. 'Twas to secure the Orthodox from any absurd Attempts of erroneous Persons, as much as to secure those that may be reputed guilty of Errors, from any Violence from the Orthodox. The World had long been acquainted with the utmost Rigour of Severity us'd by those, who in their Turns had been fined, and banish'd, and imprison'd ; and every Party of Christians when *undermost*, has always complain'd of the Cruelty and Injustice of their Adversaries. To strike at the Root of this Evil, which has been universally condemn'd ; and to encourage Truth and Honesty, and industrious Search, was my Design : And surely *This* is not what your Lordship calls *undermining the great Truths of Christianity* ? But 'till your Lordship vouchsafes to *name* these *Great Truths of Christianity*, you must permit me to deny that I have ever designedly or undesignedly, in Thought or Word ever attempted to undermine any One. And thus I pass to

* PS. p.
214.

The 3d Thing your Lordship was call'd upon for by the *Writer of the Postscript*, viz. ' The Bishop is obliged in Conscience ' to name *One serious Writer*, who has *affirmed, that in order to be justified before God, there is no need of any thing more than to ' ass agreeably to our present Persuasion.* ' Your Lordship has made no Reply to this Demand here ; but we shall meet with the Author of
The

The Innocency of Error, answerable for this three or four Pages off.

The 4th Demand made upon your Lordship by that *Writer of the Postscript*, was, 'The Bishop is in all Honour and Conscience PS. p. 215. obliged to name that Writer, whom he here represents as teaching *Sincerity*, and the acting agreeably to a present inward Persuasion to be one and the same Thing, without any regard to the Means made use of for the settling this *Persuasion*.' Your Lordship here has named Me, in these Words : 'Certain it is, that nothing more than this, [viz. acting agreeably to a present inward Persuasion] can possibly be implied in the Sincerity of those Men, who are blindly led by Authority, influenc'd by Prejudice, and govern'd by predominant Passions, which is enough to my Purpose. Surely the Notion of Sincerity in the Author of *The Innocency of Error*, and others of the same Principles, [but no one else is named] doth not imply the laying aside all Passion and Prejudice.

'Tis hard, my Lord, that I am forced to complain of every Sentence, wherever your Lordship has taken occasion to represent any of my Notions: That in so many Pages as your Lordship has spent upon my Book, I have not One Opinion fairly stated, or truly laid before that Reverend Assembly to whom you speak and write. I am here charg'd with not excluding all Passion and Prejudice, i. e. all voluntary Passion and Prejudice, out of my Notion of Sincerity. Whereas just the reverse is true, and I contend only for the Innocency
of

Defense,
P. 12.

of such Errors, as are *Involuntary*, and not *our own*. I argue that Errors arising from *preconceiv'd Hypotheses*, which are taken up 'without any Wilfulness, Insincerity, or Resolution to maintain them right or wrong,' are not damnable Errors: But notwithstanding this, your Lordship charges me with defending the Sincerity of those who are *blindly led* by Authority, and *influenc'd* by *Prejudice*. If by *Blindness* your Lordship means *wilful Blindness*, I'll venture to assure your Lordship, that there is not a Sentence or a Word throughout the Book which countenances such a Notion. Nor is that possible to be contain'd in my Notion of *Sincerity*, because the Errors wou'd be *Voluntary* in that Case; which I have always condemn'd. 'Tis the same which I have maintain'd about *predominant Passions*: Not that we shall be justified if we are 'blindly govern'd by them;' but if thro' the *Excess* of them, in which we are *Passive*, and which Excess is not owing to ourselves, we are *forc'd* to do Things, the contrary to which cool Reason dictates, we then *become the Objects* of Mercy and Goodness, not of Justice and Severity. Besides, your Lordship might have seen that I make the erroneous Person in this Case, an Object of *Mercy* and *Goodness*, which is not pleading perfect *Innocence* so much as some *Guilt*; tho' so circumstantiated, as to exclude Severity and rigid Justice, in a good and merciful Being. What I contend for, I will leave with your Lordship in Arch-Bishop Tillotson's Words, *Posth. Sermon*. Vol. 3. P. 108, — 110. 'If we put the

the Case of some that were very sincere, after they have held out a great while under the Extremity of Torments, have at last fainted under them, — and in this Amazement and Distraction have not long after expired without any Testimony of their Repentance. In this Case both Reason and Charity ought to restrain us from passing any very positive and severe Sentence upon the State of such Persons. For what do we know but God, whose Goodness will certainly make all the Allowance to *Humane Frailty* that Reason can require, (*for He knows whereof we are made, &c.*) may graciously be pleas'd to accept such a Degree of constant Suffering of great Torments for so long a Time for a true Martyrdom, and not expect a more than Human Patience and Resolution, &c. Without some such equitable Consideration of the Case of such Persons it will be very hard to reconcile some Appearances of things with the Goodness of God, &c.

I own that this is a *Profession* of an Error thro' predominant Passion, and Infirmary, rather than the actual *Being* in One arising from the same Source. But then if the Effect of Error, wherein there is a mixture of Agency, be what will be excus'd, much more must such an Error it self, wherein we are perfectly involuntary, and merely passive.

In my Account of *Predominant Passions*, your Lordship now will see that I do not, I cannot, reckon him a *sincere* Man who is 'blindly governed by Passions,' and thus acts agreeably to a present inward Persuasion : For I

condemn *such* a Person as having a faulty *Will*, and not being careful in his Search after Truth. Your Lordship's Representation of this Place is, as if I justified *any* Person, who acts agreeably to a present Persuasion, let him come by it *wilfully* or *not*. I plead for the Man who falls into Error thro' mere Infirmary or Necessity; and this is, with very hard Reflections, changed into pleading for one who falls in thro' *wilful Blindness* and *Choice*. *These things*, my Lord, *ought not to be*.

PS. P. 218. The 5th and 6th Thing your Lordship was call'd upon to prove, by *the Writer of the Postscript*, were these: 'Name the Writer who has maintain'd that *equal Degrees of Sincerity will in all Cases entitle Men to—equal Rewards in Heaven*. And, to produce 'the Writer who has declared Sincerity to 'consist in a Man's doing a particular Action *without Remorse or Hesitation*.' I do not find that the *Author of The Innocency of Error* is charg'd with maintaining either of these Notions, by your Lordship; unless it be that I, being expressly charged with the *Premises*, must be understood to hold and maintain the *Consequences* which you have drawn from them. However, as I deny absolutely both these *Consequences*, I must beg of your Lordship to name the Writer who has expressly held them. The Change, and the Abuse of Words is here so palpable in making, *without Remorse and Hesitation*, to signify, *Sincerity*, that excepting in the present Controversy, 'twill be hard to find a Parallel to it: And your not attempting
to

P. 220.

to speak a Word about it in your *Defence*, makes me persuade my self, that your Lordship saw it, and was willing that it should drop in Silence ; just as there are some other Passages of your *Charge*, in which I am not concerned, which justly shocked every Reader ; and which *now* seem to be given up as indefensible, since nothing is said in their *Defence*.

There is but One Thing more wherein I can think my self concern'd in your Lordship's *Defence* of your *Charge*, and that is, that whereas the Bishop of *Bangor* has declared, that in the Sentence which gave occasion to the Controversy about Sincerity, *he was speaking entirely about Christians in a Christian Country*, your Lordship from Mr. *Stebbing* assures us, ' that some who have taken great Pains to P. 29. defend the Bishop of *Bangor*, ' and could not want Means to know his true Sentiments, have extended the Doctrine of *Sincerity* to *Unbelievers* as well as others.

If, my Lord, *Sincerity* be a Duty, and the Practice of it a Virtue, Infidels must exercise it as well as Believers, and thus ' the Doctrine of Sincerity is extended ' to them. The Favour of God too has been extended by my self and others to *Unbelievers* too : Nor can this, I hope, be any Crime, because P. 30. your Lordship does not ' doubt but *Sincerity* ' is a very prevailing Motive to the Mercy of God to extend his Compassion to such *Unbelievers* as are possess'd of this good Quality. ' But then, cannot the Favour of God be equally extended to all *Unbelievers* who are equally Sincere, without placing all

such Unbelievers in the Joys of that peculiar Kingdom, which Christ has procured for HIS faithful Subjects, who are and must be Believers? Or why must the Comparison be run betwixt *Believers* and *Unbelievers*, because the Sincerity of each is the same? Unbelievers that are Sincere may be in the Favour of God, tho' not admitted to the Joys of sincere Christians; because the Belief in Jesus Christ is a *Capacity*, which *Infidels* have not, for a peculiar Degree of Happiness: and the Rewards of God will equally follow equal Sincerity only where every Capacity is equal. When therefore your Lordship says, that 'should any Prince openly profess that Rewards should *equally* follow every *equal* Degree of Merit,' you must presuppose *equal* Capacities in the Subject, and the Prince able to reward *equal* Merit *equally*, and in the same Degree. If therefore Heathens had equal *Capacities*, and equal *Merit*, (to continue the use of that improper Word) they would have their Reward in the same Degree. But no Man ever said that they had *equal Capacities*, and *equal Merit*, Sincerity alone not being Both these. To the Belief of Christ, a *peculiar* Reward is promised, which is not promised to them that do not believe. Suppose now Sincerity in a Christian, and in an Unbeliever exactly the same, yet the peculiar promise of Reward made to *Belief*, sets the *Believer* in a Station peculiar to himself.

But, my Lord, these are trifling Researches, of no great Use that I know of. The real Controversy, and which I should re-
 joice

joice to see clearly stated, is, How far bare Error, the Result of Search and Industry, will throw a Man out of the Favour of God? Will a Man that mistakes any Doctrine of Christianity, be quite out of the Favour of God, on account of such his Mistake? Shall his Errors, taken up after an exact Enquiry, supposing them to be in Matters of the utmost Consequence, make him obnoxious to the Wrath of God? These would be Enquiries worth your Lordship's Trouble; and would tend to the Peace of the Christian World: And when these are settled, I do not question but we may adjust the Title to 'the outward Privileges of the Church,' with ease; and find the true Grounds of fixing upon a lasting Basis, what your Lordship calls, 'The outward State of Religion.' *Defense,* P. 31.

My LORD,

I had not troubled your Lordship in this publick manner, had not I been represented, as an *Underminer* of our common Christianity, and an Encourager of even *Mahometism* and *Infidelity*, and in this View marked out by your Lordship, to your Clergy. I cannot be so much a Stranger to Mankind, as to be ignorant, that your Lordship's Censure will make that Pamphlet, however despicable in it self, exactly read and consider'd, and every little Mistake over critically examin'd. I am sensible how hard a thing it is to be free from Mistakes; But I do not think it any hard Thing to acknowledge them and to amend. I

ac-

acknowledge the Terms, *Predominant Passions*, not to be so clear and expressive of my Mind as I could wish, tho' They were the properest Terms I then could think of. They have led your Lordship into a very great Mistake about my Meaning; and if a Man of your Lordship's Abilities can be misled by them, Others may much more easily mistake them. There may be other Words as *improper* as these: But 'tis not *Words*, but *Things* which I would insist on. If your Lordship will be so kind as *erranti comiter monstrare viam*, to put me in the Way where I am out of it, this Condescension in you will lay a perpetual Obligation upon

My LORD,

Your Lordship's

most obedient Servant,

Arthur Ashley Sykes



ERRATA.

PAge 3. from the bottom l. 5. for . put
P. 5. l. 9. r. names. P. 6. l. 10. for ?
put . P. 12. l. 7. r. Objection. P. 16. l. 11.
for . put , P. 18. l. 28. after *Error* add, of
one Sort or other. P. 25. l. 8. r. suspect. P.
30. l. 2. r. Persecution. *Ibid.* l. 24. for, ever,
r. either. l. 25, for, attempted to undermine,
r. undermined. P. 32. l. ult. for 108---110,
r. 408---410.



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